765 783 516 anointed with the medicine. As regards adults, the operation of *maganyo* is performed as follows ; the master of the mourning passes his hand down from the knee to the toes. This rite[1] is evidently in connexion with the act of walking, which is thus purified, and with standing upright (yima), which means health and strength.

765 783 302 *Cutting the hair* is also a medicinal act amongst the Hlabis. The physician takes a broken pot, pours into it water and a purifying powder, washes the head of the deceased's wife with this preparation and cuts her hair with a razor. Everyone takes a little of the mixture and washes his own head, and they then shave each other. The hair is thrown away into the bush, not on the grave.

765 783 177 231 The Great Mourning is concluded by the *phunga*, the sprinkling, corresponding to the Ronga *shuba*, which is performed exactly in the same way while the water is still boiling. The doctor sprinkles a whole potful on the people ; then he pours fresh water into the pot and sprinkles the doors, the back part of the kraals of the oxen and of the goats. —"How about the pigs ?" I asked Viguet. He laughed heartily! —"The pigs? They are nothing ! They have come from the White people They are so new to the country that lately the Pedis killed them outside the villages and the men only ate their flesh!" The pig has no part in the Bantu ritual!

V. *Sexual rites of purification.*

765 783 834 This is a most curious and mysterious subject and, to understand it thoroughly, it is necessary to penetrate deeply into the Bantu mind and to forget our own conceptions of conjugal life. I hope none of my readers will be shocked by ceremonies which are evidently performed with the greatest earnestness and are a real aspiration toward purity, purity as it is conceived by a tribe still plunged in the dim notions of collective morality.

1 [among the Northern clans --Analyst]

606 side. She does the same. Then you sit down according to
316 men's fashion, crossing your legs. She also sits down bending
834 her legs, and putting one knee over the other as women do; then
576 both parties salute each other, you, as a man, clapping your hands against each other, holding them parallel, and the woman holding hers at right angles. 'Then you begin to talk..."

Suppose the son-in-law has had the good luck to reach the village of his wife's relatives without having met his mother-in-law, but sees her sitting somewhere near a hut. This is dreadful. She looks at him and at once covers her breasts with her cloth. He himself turns his eyes aside. I saw in Natal a curious photograph representing the scene. Amongst the Zulus the avoidance of the mother-in-law is perhaps more marked than in any other tribe; the man is shown in the picture hiding his face
606 with his shield. Should the mother-in-law be taking her meal
576 when her son-in-law arrives unexpectedly, she throws away the mouthful she was eating, and he does the same.— Suppose then that he has entered the village without seeing her; then the tinamu, his wife's sisters, come hastily to meet him. They take his sticks, joking with him meanwhile and put them in his mother-in-law's hut. This hut is his; he has the right of staying in it during his whole visit. They spread a mat on the ground, and bring him food. They chat with him. Then the mother-in-law comes in her turn, but she dares not enter the hut. She sits down outside and, without seeing him, salutes him, saying: "Good morning, son of so and so." She must not pronounce his name. He answers in the same style, and must also say: "Daughter of so and so." Should he call her by her name it would be a breach of etiquette and his wife would be angry and say: "How dare you? Did she not bring me forth? Rather say: Mother!" During the first years of his married life, the son-in-law never eats with his wife's mother.

607 This peculiar behaviour is the rule, not only towards the wife's mother, but also towards her sisters.

606 In the course of years there is a *lessening* of this terrible taboo.
431 In the Maputju clan, the son-in-law will provide an ox as soon as
576 possible and he will "communicate" (tlhangana) with her, partaking

462 Many other home duties may oblige the woman to leave the
511 fields at noon; her head still laden with her basket, she may
356 go to the swamps, near by, and dig out a store of black clay
317 (bompfi). She comes back, mixes the clay with the fresh dung which she has taken from the oxen kraal, and, spreading this mixture with her hands, smears the floor of the hut. This work is called *sindja* (Ro) or *kopola* (Dj.). Dust and vermin will at once disappear under this plaster of black earth, which will dry in a few hours time. Woe to the woman who has not put enough dung in this novel kind of cement! The floor will crack. The clay will shrivel and, when people walk on it, it will crumble into dust! The work will have to be done all over again two or three days later. But if the clay is of good quality, it will harden and last at least a week, the more so as neither wooden shoes nor nailed boots will spoil it.

462 Another woman will go with her primitive axe in search of
511 dead wood. She makes a bundle which she ties with grasses,
213 strengthening these grasses by entwining them with small
284 twigs (1). On returning to the village, she throws her burden on to the ground, before the door of her hut, with the exclamation: "Hu!"

462 Others go to their storehouses, the small huts on poles, where
511 mealies, monkey nuts in their husks, millet and sorghum are kept.
343 They take what they need from these stores (tshaha) by lifting up
252 the roof of the little hut, come back and empty the mealies into the
316 mortar, whilst a friend rubs off the grains from the ears of millet or shells the monkey nuts. Two or three women seize their pestles and begin to pound, in measured time, the bottom of their mortars: Gu-gu-gu-gu. Quite a long way off, on the other side of the copse, this pestle song can be heard, resembling the noise of the flails when corn is threshed in the barn. And the busy women stream with perspiration! This method of crushing the mealies in an erect position, by a vigorous up and down movement of the pestle in

284 (1) Men, when they fasten a bundle with a string, make a knot (ba fundju) whilst
313 women twist it with a little stick (sulela hi linhi); when a woman ties a knot, the two ends of the string will be at right angles to the string, whilst when a man makes it, the ends will be parallel with it. (Mboza).

516 the mortar, is a very healthy one and gives the Thonga women a straight and slender figure. In the tribes where the millet is mostly ground between stones, the women who do this work kneeling are shorter and stouter.

462 511 312 Before putting the mealies on the fire, the women go down to the village well, their round pitchers on their heads, to fetch the water they need. In the Ronga country these wells are simple holes dug in the sand, in the centre of the hollows (1). Wells are generally surrounded by thorny branches so as to prevent the cattle from coming to drink and fouling the water. It must be observed that it is not a spring which feeds the well ; it is the underground layer of water which has been reached, and which always maintains the same level except in times of drought.

[415]

462 511 372 252 *Phot. A. de Meuron.*

Shilovane girls returning from the well.

The sun goes down on the horizon. The long shadows of the trees round the village lengthen on the square. Through the leaves, a few rays still reach the fireplaces and traverse the smoke which rises peacefully from the various kitchens. Between broken pots, or between the pieces of termitine clay which constitute the hearth on which the pots rest, the women place some pieces of dead wood ; when these burn away in the centre, they push them further under the pot where the flour is cooking (ba hlanganyeta ndjilo). Evening has come. The men have arrived. With a large spoon (nkombe) the lady of the house

(1) In the Transvaal, where there are rivers, water is taken from them, or from wells dug near the spruit into which the water leaks through the soil, being more or less filtered by this process.

524

Ntshiba ukulu wa mpfufuti ? — Ndjeko yikulu ya balungu.
The tall ntshiba? — The long tumblers of the Whites.

The ntshiba is the tallest tree on the Ronga hills, and casts a grateful shade. The long tumblers used by the Whites answer the same purpose ; both conduce to the refreshment of the weary!

Tihuku ta ka Manyisa ta ka nhingena he paisuka ?
— Baŋwhanyana ba ka Manyisa ba ku kandja ba khisamile.
The fowls of Manyisa enter the fowl-house tails first ?
— The Manyisa girls pound maize sitting down.

This is probably a sly hit at the girls of the Manyisa country [516] who are reported to sit down when crushing maize ; everywhere else this operation is performed standing up. They don't do things like other people. — Chickens also sometimes do things the wrong way!

Riddles which refer to some *historical event* may be classed in a third category. The best known is that concerning Tembe and his sons. (See I, p. 23.) — Here is another :

Ndji fambi nhlangwa lokulu ndji heketa Mimaleyane ?
— Ndji djimi nsimo leyikulu, ndji byala ndlowu yiŋwe.
I walked right across a big plain to accompany Memaleyane ?
— I hoed a large field and only planted a single pea.

This is doubtless the story of a rejected lover who thus wittily relates his discomfiture. He took all the trouble to accompany Mimaleyane a long way, right to her home, and received no reward for his gallantry. As well hoe a whole field and only plant one pea! A great deal of trouble for nothing!

A fourth category of riddles comprises those in which no real similarity of ideas would seem to exist, but merely a *similitude in sound*, a sort of graceful alliteration which is pleasing to the ear. The two following examples are very popular and very pretty from the point of view of euphony :

He kumi nkuhlu, u wupfa, ka ku sala huhlu yiŋwe ?
— He kumi mulungu, a wondja-wondja, ka ku sala ndjepfu yiŋwe.
We found a *nkuhlu* which ripens, which ripens ; only one nut is left ?
— We found a White man who gets thinner, thinner : nothing left but a hair of his beard.

The comparison of ideas is not difficult to perceive, but what conclusion or moral can the author mean to convey? None!

533 Of course the colonists, who only knew "Kitchen Kafir,"
539 could not understand the complaint of the Nkuna boy!

The *song of the crab* is more tragic! (Tune No. 10). In a deep minor key a man cries for help! He went to hunt the big crabs which dwell in the mud of the mangrove forest, or on the sea-shore. He followed one ; the animal hastily hid itself in its hole. The imprudent hunter tried to catch it there ; he put his arm into the hole and attempted to pull the crab out. But the crustacean seized his finger in its claws so firmly that the man could not get free. He remained tightly held down, fixed to the ground. The tide is rising; soon it will cover him! And he cries :

Yo-o ! Lomo tjukeni ku na mani ? — Hala yi khomi litiho !
Alas ! - On the shore is there some one ? — The crab has caught me by the finger !

This is almost dramatic poetry and the scene is worthy of a true literary description.

533 The *erotic style* is cultivated by boys and girls on different
832 occasions though it must be said that love, as we understand it,
539 plays but little part in Thonga life. Boys in love generally express their feelings to the accompaniment of the unicord harp (see Chap. III) in the evening in the neighbourhood of the village of their beloved one ; I have never been able to catch the words of these songs, which are said to be sometimes very long, and are sung in a very loud voice ; they are not precisely chaste, according to one of our Native ministers, who considered that the use of the unicord harp ought to be forbidden to Christian boys! But here is a *love song* probably composed by a girl who was not allowed to marry the boy of her choice :

To-morrow, to-morrow, my mother, I will start,
To-morrow, father, I will start,
I will start with an axe ;
With this axe I will cut the stump,
The stump on which my friend has hurt his leg,
My friend whose belt of tails hangs from his waist,
The one for whom I draw my legs out of the way. (1)

784 (1) Perhaps an allusion to the fact that it is taboo to pass over any one's outstretched
516 legs. She draws in her legs to give him the means of passing and coming to sit beside her.